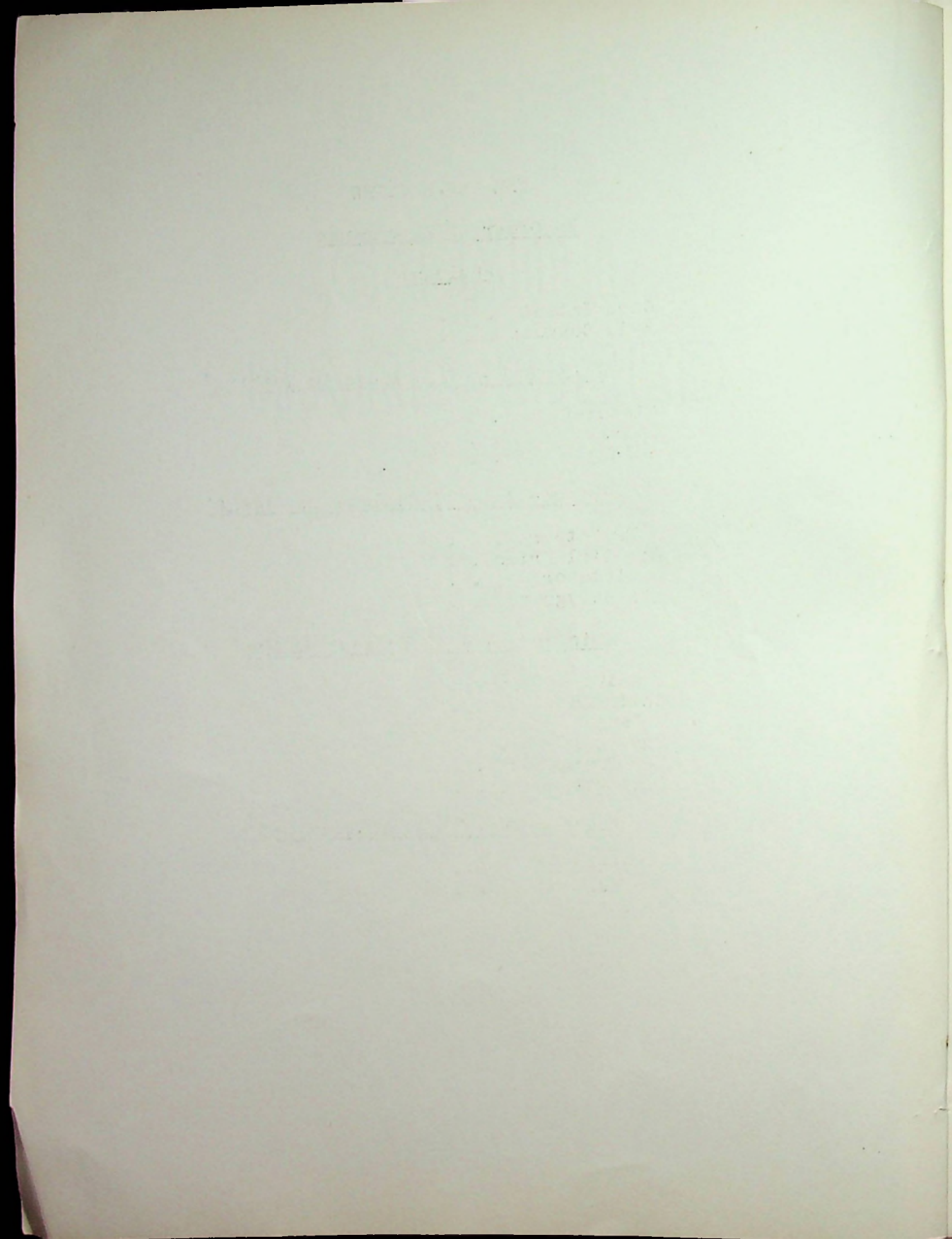


'CREDO'

A MASQUE FOR TONIGHT'S FESTIVAL
ROYAL ALBERT HALL NOV. 18. 1950.

BY

BARCLAY BARON.



THE CHARACTERS

In Order of Appearance

Prologue

Good Intent . . .
Evil Counsel . . .

Episode I - 'I Believe in Nothing'

Mischief . . .
A Spiv . . .
A Thug . . .

Episode II - 'I Believe in Myself'

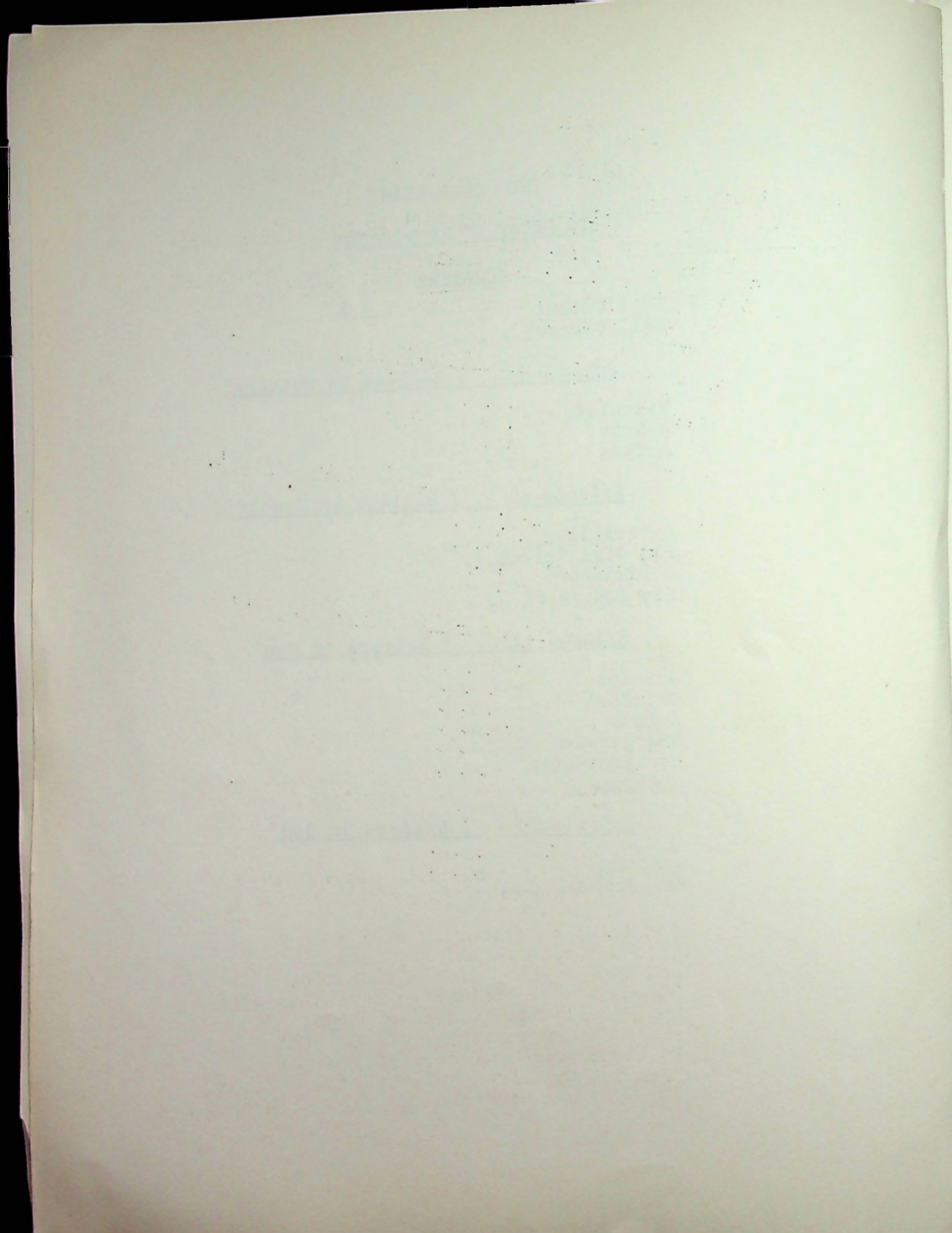
A Profiteer . . .
His Girl Friend . .
A Dictator . . .
His Bodyguard . . .

Episode III - 'I Believe in Man'

A Saint . . .
Children . . .
A Lady . . .
The Pursuer . . .
Her Protector . . .
A Beggar . . .

Episode IV - 'I Believe in God'

A Mother . . .
Her Husband . . .



Prologue.

House lights out: corner of stage left in pale amber spot.
corner right in steel-blue spot.
Enter from bull-run left GOOD INTENT and moves down stage
into amber spot, from bull-run right EVIL COUNSEL into
blue spot. They face each other and speak:

EVIL COUNSEL: The World is very old-
 Dying - already rotten.
 Man is a mould,
 A mildew, misbegotten
 Upon the World's decay:
 He has had his day.
 Now he is brushed away
 By the sleeve of Time -
 A little film of slime,
 Forgotten.
 Mould creeps and swell and smells
 In darkness best.
 Man, that in darkness dwells,
 Slavers with scum the lip
 Of the lost abyss
 Till down and down he slip;
 He has no other end than this -
 Blind time will do the rest.

GOOD INTENT: The World is young; it wakes anew
 At every darling dawn to see
 Fresh flashing diamonds of the dew
 And living leaves on every tree.
 Then Pastured herds
 And nesting birds
 And singing streams
 And all things, in their several ways,
 Give praise
 And hail,
 Confiding that there cannot fail
 This sequence of undying days.
 And Man, awaking from his dreams,
 Stands up and strides to make them true.
 For Man is made a child of light,
 The crown of all created things,
 Fashioned for freedom, fitly dight
 To fight the wrong and choose the right,
 To run his race and rise with wings

EVIL COUNSEL:

I see a slave that dumbly sleeps
Or, waking, cannot rise but creeps
Down to his dust.
For through the ages I have power
To hasten Man's appointed hour,
Corrupt his mind, disarm his will,
Squander him soul and body, till
To death he must.

GOOD INTENT:

Suffer and fall and fail he may,
But no defect can bar his way
Up to the height.
I have his heart and keep his arm
And shield his soul from lasting harm.
Thus evermore to me he turns,
And evermore his spirit burns
With inward light.

EVIL COUNSEL:

All that you say
Is foolishness
To me.

GOOD INTENT:

It is Man's way
To curse - and bless.
Now let us see.

EPISODE 1 - 'I Believe in Nothing'

The stage is flooded with dull green light.

The rhythm of a dance-band begins and continues, now softer, now louder, throughout the Episode.
Enter from up stage A SPIV. He is attended by MISCHIEF, who dances round him mockingly. He strolls down stage towards EVIL COUNSEL and sidles up to him.

SPIV: Interested in watches, guv'nor. Or I've got a nice line in nylons.

E.C.: I couldn't care less. (SPIV turns to go).
One question - what do you believe in ?

SPIV: I believe in - Nothing. Why?

E.C.: O, nothing, only - brave boy!

Delighted MISCHIEF seizes SPIV and leads him across the stage, to GOOD INTENT. SPIV takes a piece of jewellery from his pocket and holds it out to G.I. who motions it away with his hand.

G.I.: So you believe in Nothing?

SPIV: Believe ? Believe ! My foot !

He turns away with a laugh and strolls jauntily to the dais, mounts it and sprawls in the chair. He pulls a flask from his hip-pocket and drinks, then brings nylons, watches and jewellery from his pockets and examines them with satisfaction. All the while MISCHIEF dances on the stage round him to forlorn music.
A THUG slinks in from behind and watches him stealthily. SPIV looks round apprehensively and THUG slips behind the dais and emerges on the other side.

SPIV: nervously: What's the game, old pal?

THUG: O - nothing.

SPIV, hurriedly: Here y'are - nylons, sparklers - anything you want - take the lot.

THUG: I want nix - and that means you.

Episode 1

SPIV starts to his feet, terrified, and a sheath-knife flashes in his hand; he stumbles from dais on to the stage in an attitude of defence. THUG is seen to hold a revolver. (As they begin to manoeuvre for position, MISCHIEF slips away and crouches at the feet of E.C.

THUG fires once; SPIV staggers and falls near bull-run opening with an agonised shout of "Nothing!" THUG drags him into bull-run by the heels.

E.C., triumphantly; So there's your child of light! Scum!

G.I., steadily: Wait and see.

During the whole action MISCHIEF is playing mockingly round the stage.)

PROFITEER, in spot light, comes down flight of steps to stage right. As he comes the CHOIR sings chorus of 'The Man that broke the Bank at Monte Carlo.'

As he passes E.C. he is hailed -

E.C.; One moment, please.

P. turning back; Eh? Can't stop long - time's money you know.

E.C.; What do you believe in?

P. Myself of course. (Slapping his chest) Self-made man, & I am!

P. turns on his heel and swaggers across stage. As he goes

E.C., with a contemptuous chuckle; And very pretty too!

Meanwhile P's GIRL FRIEND has been coming down steps to stage left, up which MISCHIEF has run to beckon her. As

G.F. passes G.I. she greets him with "Evening, dearie";

G.I. makes no sign. She meets P. in centre of stage.

P. Hullo, Sweetie-pie!

GIRL FRIEND; Mud in your eye, Daddy! (She snuggles up to him) Those ear-rings we saw in the window last night-

P.; taking a small parcel from his pocket and handing it to her; Aha! they ran me in for a tidy bit, ducks, but I can afford 'em.

G.F.; kissing him: Sweet little Daddy. Come and meet my new friend - regular toff.

She leads him by the arm to G.I.

P.; taking off his hat and offering his hand:

Evening, old cock. My seetie-pie tells me-

G.I. making no move to shake hands: So you really believe in yourself?

P., nettled: Well, I've done it all, haven't I? It's taken two bloody wars to make my pile - and it's been darned hard climbing, I can tell you.

G.I.: What about the men who died while you made money?

What about the people you've climbed upon?

P., after an incredulous pause: Aw, you're crackers!

G.I. to G.F.: And you?

G.F.: O, look after Number One's my motto.

P.: I'll say it is!

As they turn away, arm in arm, a pompous march is heard.

G.F.: pointing excitedly into the dark arena:

Look, Daddy - more fun!

A DICTATOR emerges, marching up the centre gangway with a
bodyguard of four STORM-TROOPERS, a pair behind him, a
pair in front.

MISCHIEF, has run laughing down the steps to arena and now
leads the party up, goose-stepping absurdly. As the
DICTATOR reaches the stage P. sweeps off his hat with a low
bow and his G.F. makes an exaggerated curtsy: D. gives them
a stiff salute in reply; then mounts the dais, with two
STORM-TROOPERS on each side, and faces the audience.

E.C., raising his arm: Great Self, hail!

DICTATOR. salutes him and begins to speak: People you
know my will. I do not ask for your opinion,
I command unquestioning obedience. Any man,
woman or child who dares to disobey -

G.I.: But who are you?

D., facing him in fury, motions to two STORM-TROOPERS
and shouts: Arrest that man!

They step forward but are halted by an imperious gesture
from G.I. and retreat. (P. and his G.F. are watching from
stage right.)

P. O boy, no can do! He goes off into peals of
laughter.

Episode 11 - 'I Believe in Myself'

DICTATOR, more furious, beckons to other pair of STORM-TROOPERS. They seize P. and force him, after a struggle, to his knees in front of dais.

G.F.: giggling hysterically: O Daddykins, you do look funny!

DICTATOR: Take the woman too - and knock some sense into them both.

First pair of STORM-TROOPERS arrest G.F.

DICTATOR: Move off!

The prisoners are marched off up stage to bull-run.
DICTATOR following and MISCHIEF capering delightedly in rear of the procession.

E.C.: contemptuously: And that's your wise men!
Performing fleas!

G.I.: calmly: I am still waiting.

Episode 111 - 'I Believe in Man'

The whole stage is now in sunlight. Down flight of stairs left comes ST. FRANCIS in brown habit. He walks very wearily. As he comes a man's voice sings -

I would I were some bird or star,
Flutt'ring in woods, or lifted far
Above this inn and road of sin.
Then either star or bird should be
Shining or singing unto Thee.

As he reaches the stage GOOD INTENT welcomes him and motions him forward to the dais. On it FRANCIS kneels in prayer, raising his face and lifting his hands high as the singer reaches the last line of the second verse -

I would I had in my best part
Fit rooms for Thee, or that my heart
Were so clean as Thy manger was;
But I am all filth and obscene.
Yet, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make clean.

Summoned by EVIL COUNSEL he rises and goes down to stage right.

E.C.: Come here.

FRANCIS: Coming, brother.

E.C.: Why 'brother'?

FRANCIS: All men are brothers.

E.C.: What do you believe in?

FRANCIS: I believe in Man, brother, because I believe in -

E.C. sternly interrupting: That's enough for now.

FRANCIS bows to E.C. and turns away. The organ begins to play and CHILDREN come running in and gather round FRANCIS who welcomes them. He returns to the dais and sits down on it, watching CHILDREN dance to the round 'Sumer is icumen in'

Sumer is icumen in,
Loude sing cuckoo!
Groweth seed and bloweth mead
And spring'th the woode now -
Sing cuckoo!

Ewe bleateth after lamb,
Low'th after calfe cow;
Bullock sterteth, bucke verteth -
Merry sing cuckoo!
Sing cuckoo, sing cuckoo!

Suddenly there is a woman's cry from the dark arena.
The dance stops abruptly and the CHILDREN, frightened,
cluster round FRANCIS.

FRANCIS: rising Away little flowers of God, quickly-away!
As the CHILDREN run to G.I. for protection, a LADY,
running through the arena and up the steps reaches the
stage. She is closely followed by her PURSUER and cries
'Help' as he seizes her.

PURSUER: embracing her roughly: Mine, beauty, mine at last!

Her PROTECTOR, following close behind, rushes on to the
stage, his sword drawn.

PROTECTOR: Have done, villain, and draw!

PURSUER thrusts LADY violently aside and she falls, he
draws his sword and clashes with PROTECTOR, both crying
"Mine!", "She's mine".

FRANCIS helps LADY to her feet, then strides between the
duellists, making the sign of the Cross; they fall back.

FRANCIS: My little children, there is no 'Mine' nor
'Thine'. We are all in God's hand. Put up
your swords.

They sheath their weapons reluctantly. FRANCIS takes
each by the arm and makes them shake hands.

FRANCIS to the LADY: Come, my sister, speak your mind.
God makes me a judge in this.

LADY, taking her PROTECTOR'S arm: O, sir, this is my dear
friend. I love but him only.

FRANCIS: Love God, little sister, above all else.
And take your friend as a gift from His
providence. Live, both of you, in His
love and henceforth serve only Him.

While he is speaking a BEGGAR creeps in from behind and as
he finishes tries to snatch the wallet from PURSUER'S belt.
PURSUER turns on him, seizes him round the throat and, in a
short struggle, throws him back upon the stage. The LADY
helps the BEGGAR to his feet, FRANCIS restrains the PURSUER.
They stand on either side of him.

BEGGAR: Father, I was hungry.

PURSUER: Sir, I wanted this woman.

FRANCIS, laughing gaily: Then you are brethren indeed -
two hungry men, two beggars, thieves both
of you. Little brothers of mine also,
learn first with joy to give and to receive.
(To PURSUER) Your plenty for his need
(PURSUER gives alms from his wallet to the
BEGGAR). And then come with me that we may
seek the living Bread and hunger no more.

EVIL COUNSEL: There is Man for you - a creature of lust.

GOOD INTENT: He is also Love.

E.C.: A miserable beggar.

G.I.: He is also joy.

E.C.: A fighter born.

G.I.: He is also Peace.

While they are speaking all the characters of the Episode
gather on stage left as if in expectation of some fresh
event.

To the music of 'Turn back, O Man, forswear thy foolish ways' a pair of figures advances slowly up the arena, from darkness into an amber spot - a MOTHER shrouded in a disguise cloak, in which her Child is folded, and her HUSBAND, a carpenter.

The group on the stage left point and whisper as this pair come forward up the steps to stage and mount the dais. The MOTHER sits looking down at the Child in her lap; her HUSBAND stands beside her, his hand on her shoulder. The CHILDREN leave G.I. and come forward to look at the Child.

All the other characters of the Masque begin to enter from right bull-run and group themselves on right of dais, looking on in curiosity. At the same time E.C. and G.I. come slowly forward towards the dais, speaking as they come:

EVIL COUNSEL: harshly: So another man-child is born.

GOOD INTENT: Unto us a Son is give.

E.C.: Born to strife.

G.I.: The Prince of Peace.

E.C.: Born to be a slave.

G.I.: To be a King.

E.C.: Born only to suffer and to die.

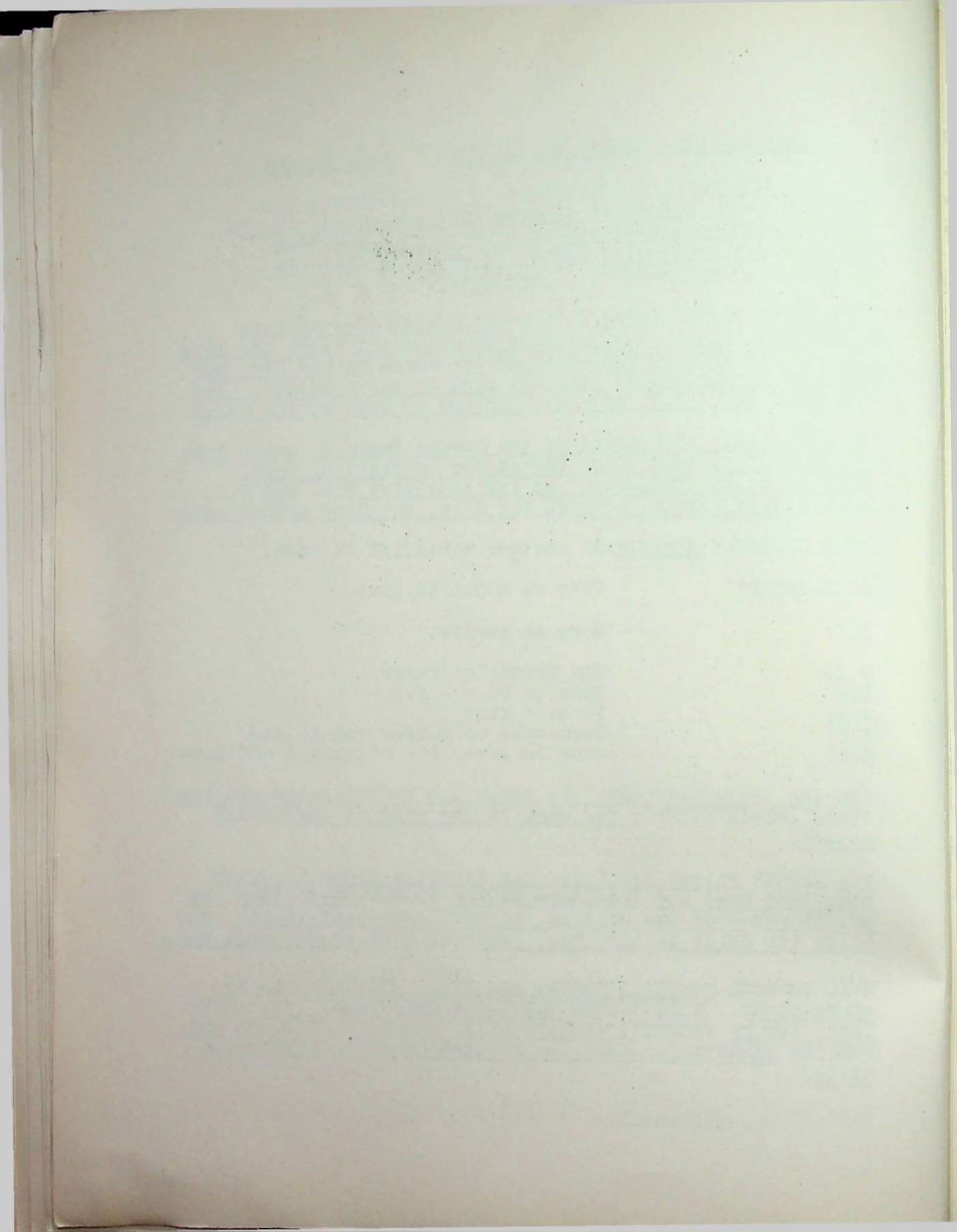
G.I.: Come to give Life and Light and Love

(During these movements the organ has been quietly playing 'This endris night'; the song is now sung as the MOTHER moves).

The MOTHER raises her face; her disguise cloak is drawn back from head and shoulders by her HUSBAND, revealing the bright robes of the Madonna, in brilliant spot-light. She holds the Child in her arms. The CHILDREN group round her.

EVIL COUNSEL recoils, hiding his face, and retreats to stage right. GOOD INTENT kneels by dais left. The GROUP left, led by FRANCIS, sink to their knees. PROTECTOR and PURSUER unsheathing their swords and uplifting the cross-hilts.

THIS GROUP, fervently: We believe in God!



There are movements also in the GROUP right - PROFITEER removes his hat slowly, his GIRL FRIEND hides her face in her hands, then kneels; the SPIV, his head bandaged, takes the THUG'S arm and they take a step forward together and stare at the group on the dais; the DICTATOR gives a hesitating salute, his STORM-TROOPERS following him.

The MOTHER: still seated and looking up, begins to say the

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit
hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded (bowing her head) the
lowliness of his handmaiden,
For behold from henceforth all generations
shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me and
(slowly, bowing her head again) holy is his Name.
And (looking left to the kneeling group) his
mercy is on them that fear him, throughout
all generations.
(She rises, the Child on her left arm)
He hath shewed strength with his arm;
He hath scattered the proud in the
imagination of their hearts.

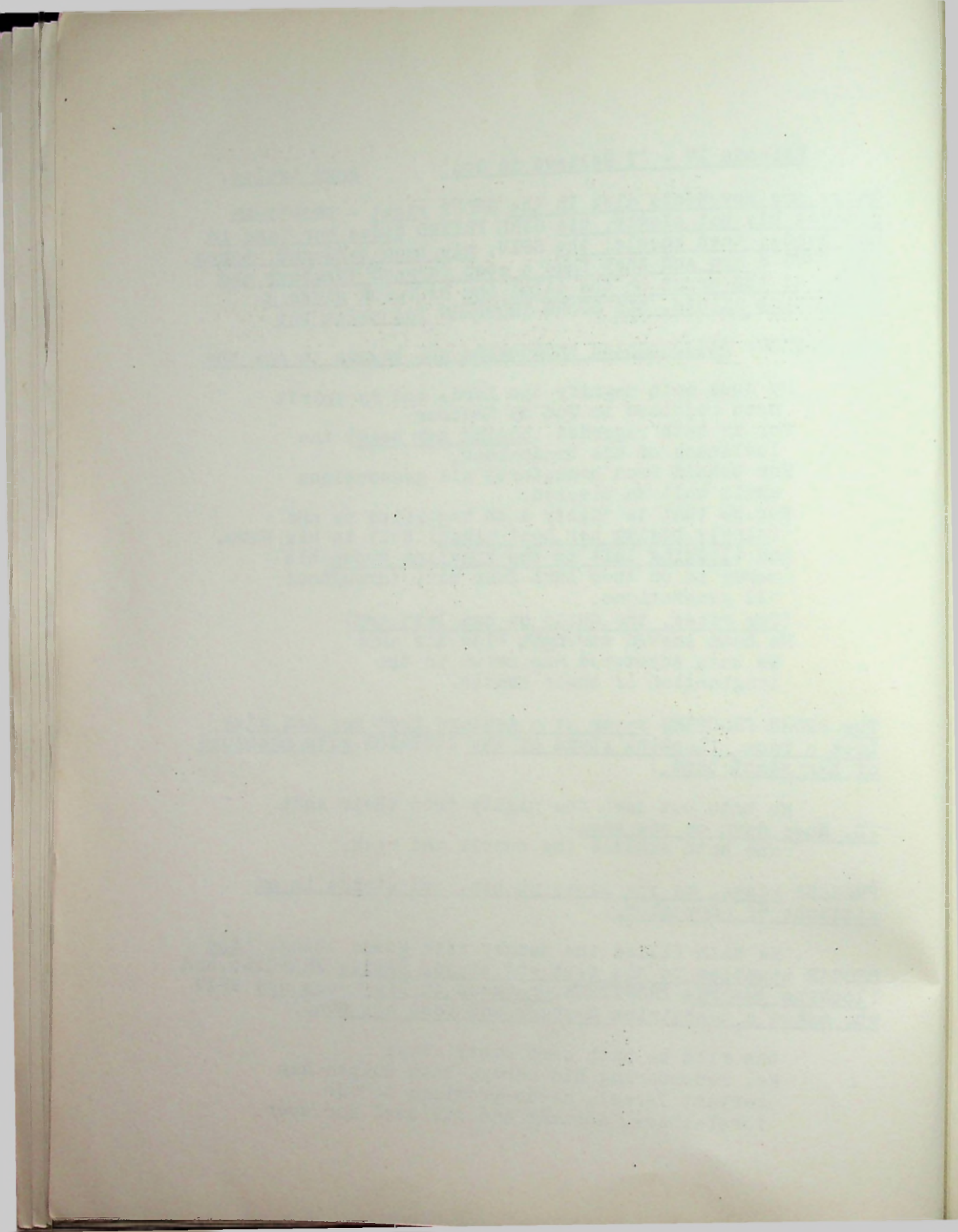
The STORM-TROOPERS waver at a gesture from her and give back a pace. (Looking round at the DICTATOR, with a gesture of her right hand.)

He hath put down the mighty from their seat
(D. goes down on one knee),
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

FRANCIS rises, as she looks at him, and stands in an attitude of adoration.)

He hath filled the hungry with good things (the BEGGAR stumbles to his feet and stands beside FRANCIS), and
(looking towards PROFITEER, who goes on his knees and SPIV who makes a despairing gesture and bows his head)

the rich he hath sent empty away.
He, remembering his mercy, hath holpen his
servant Israel, as he promised to our
forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.



Page thirteen.

Episode IV - ' I Believe in God'

The MOTHER comes slowly down from the dais and moves towards the steps to the arena. The CHILDREN fall in front of her and trip, with garlands, down the centre gangway. Behind her FRANCIS, followed by his GROUP from stage left. Behind them the characters in GROUP right. They process down the gangway and exeunt.

As the MOTHER begins to move a woman's voice (from organ loft) begins to sing

I sing of a Maiden
That is wakeless...

